

REMARKS

The Examiner is kindly requested to confirm whether the drawings filed with this application on September 17, 2003 are accepted by the Examiner, in the next communication to Applicants.

Claims 1-4 are pending.

In Paragraph No. 1 of the Action, claims 1-2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Murata (2001/0055678 A1).

Applicants submit that this rejection should be withdrawn because Murata does not disclose or render obvious the tacky dust cleaner of the present invention.

As recited in independent claim 1, the present invention relates to a tacky dust cleaner which has an expanded pressure-sensitive adhesive layer. The expanded pressure-sensitive adhesive layer is constituted of a pressure-sensitive adhesive comprising (A) an acrylic polymer containing an isocyanate group-reactive functional group, (B) a polyisocyanate based compound, (C) thermally expandable microspheres, and (D) an amine based compound containing plural hydroxyl groups.

Claim 2 depends from claim 1, and recites that the expanded pressure-sensitive adhesive layer is formed on at least one surface of a substrate.

With respect to element (D) of present claim 1, Murata does not disclose, teach or suggest using an amine based compound containing plural hydroxyl groups as an additive. In this regard, it appears that the Examiner relies on melamine alkyl ethers as satisfying element (D) of present claim 1. See paragraph [0030] at page 3 of Murata. However, melamine alkyl ethers

do not contain plural hydroxyl groups. Moreover, it appears that melamine alkyl ethers are the only amine based compound taught as an additive in Murata. For at least this reason, Murata fails to disclose or teach all of the elements of present claims 1 and 2.

In view of the above, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 1-2 based on Murata (2001/0055678 A1).

In Paragraph No. 3 of the Action, claims 1-2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over Carfagna (6,779,976) in view of Murata.

Applicants submit that this rejection should be withdrawn because Carfagna '976 and Murata do not disclose or render obvious the tacky dust cleaner of the present invention, either alone or in combination.

The Examiner states that Carfagna relates to a tacky dust cleaner having an expanded pressure sensitive adhesive layer on one surface of a substrate. See page 4 of the Action. As noted by the Examiner, however, Carfagna fails to teach that the adhesive contains isocyanate and amine based compounds. The Examiner reasons that it would have been obvious to utilize Murata's teaching of using polyisocyanate and melamine as cross-linking agents in the adhesive composition of Carfagna with the motivation to cross-link the adhesive composition.

With due respect, Applicants submit that the Examiner's reasoning is not persuasive. A person of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to incorporate both the polyisocyanate compounds and the melamine compounds of Murata into Carfagna. In this regard, polyisocyanates and melamine alkyl ethers as described in Murata belong to specific

classes or types of cross-linking agents. It is highly unlikely that these two different types of cross-linking agents would be used simultaneously by a person of ordinary skill in the art.

Furthermore, neither Carfagna nor Murata teaches the use of amine based compounds that contain plural hydroxyl groups. As discussed relative to the preceding rejection, melamine alkyl ethers as disclosed in Murata do not contain plural hydroxyl groups, as required for element (D) of the present claims.

An additional reason one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to combine the teachings of Murata and Carfagna is that Murata relates to a heat-peelable pressure-sensitive adhesive sheet useful in preventing electrostatic breakage of electronic parts, while Carfagna relates to a method for removing pollutants from the air by attaching a multi-layer stack of sheets to the surface of a ceiling fan blade. And, as discussed above, even if the teachings of these two references are combined, one would not arrive at the tacky dust cleaner of the present invention.

For these reasons, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the §103 rejection of claims 1-2 based on Carfagna '976 in view of Murata.

In Paragraph No. 4 of the Action, claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over Carfagna in view of Murata and Dreher (3,342,325).

Applicants submit that this rejection should be withdrawn because the cited references do not disclose or render obvious the tacky dust cleaner of present claim 4, either alone or in combination.

Claim 4 depends from independent claim 1, and recites that the tacky dust cleaner is in a rolled state in which it is wound around a core, such that the expanded pressure-sensitive adhesive layer is on the outside.

As discussed in response to the preceding rejections, neither Carfagna nor Murata teaches the use of amine based compounds that contain plural hydroxyl groups. Dreher is silent with respect to the presence of amine based compounds that contain plural hydroxyl groups. Thus, the combination of Carfagna, Murata and Dreher fails to disclose or teach all the elements of present claim 4.

Furthermore, the combination of Carfagna in view of Murata and Dreher is improper, for the same reason that the combination of Carfagna in view of Murata is improper, as discussed in response to the preceding rejection.

For these reasons, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the §103 rejection of claim 4 over Carfagna in view of Murata and Dreher.

In Paragraph No. 5 of the Action, claim 3 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Applicants note with appreciation that claim 3 is indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

In view of Applicants' response to the rejections of claims 1, 2 and 4 above, it is respectfully submitted that claim 3 is allowable in its present form.

Allowance is respectfully requested.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the

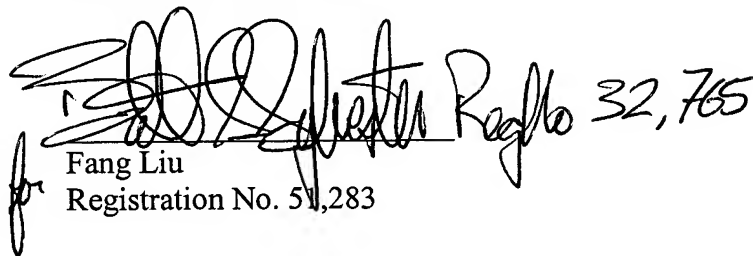
RESPONSE UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Application No.: 10/663,682

Attorney Docket Q76998

Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,


Fang Liu
Registration No. 51,283

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

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